

the thousands of their countrymen engaged on the sugar plantations. The Chinese population is very large, but not so open to evangelistic effort, though the need is great. As a point where the waves of the two types of the race—the European and the Asiatic—meet and impinge upon each other, this little group of islands is, from a missionary and humanitarian point of view, a very important position to be held for Christianity.

The address of the Samoan Queen, delivered on the occasion of the opening of a new church, is well worthy of notice. It is full of praise to God, and has as its chief burden the inculcation of brotherly love. "My last word to you is to keep and obey Christ's commandment which He gave to His disciples and to us, each and all: 'Love one another.' How can a people be blessed if God's Word is not obeyed? May God bless and help you all to obey Him, and then will true blessedness come to these islands."—*Extract from a speech made by Rev. Dr. John G. Paton, of the New Hebrides, at Exeter Hall.*

China.

THE RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

THE year 1895 has probably been the most trying that has ever been experienced by the missionaries in China. At its commencement the war with Japan was still proceeding, and, although the changes effected by it are much less apparent than might have been expected, owing to the intervention of Russia and the other Powers, still the indirect result has been great, and must still be far-reaching. Until the hopeless inefficiency of China to defend herself had been made manifest by the unbroken victories of the Japanese, she was still regarded as having immense resources that might be brought to bear, in case of an attack upon her. These indefinite ideas have now been entirely dispelled, and China's inability to offer any effective defence against an attack has been clearly demonstrated. This has produced a new condition of affairs, and what the ultimate issues are to be no one can at present foresee. We can, however, wait upon God in prayer that He will overrule all events to the furtherance of the Gospel and the coming of His kingdom. For the present we are face to face with a condition of things which, in some provinces, is not far removed from complete lawlessness; while, from without, the Powers seem to regard themselves as able to have their own way in reference to the Chinese Empire, and this attitude might very naturally result in serious interference with its independence.

As more or less intimately connected with the above general condition of the Empire, we have, in looking back, to refer to the riots in Si-ch'uen, which took place early in the summer. No such series of widespread and seemingly organized disturbances has ever taken place before, and the hindrance to the outward progress of the work has been serious, and it will be a long time ere it is likely to be made up. Some of the stations which had to be abandoned still remain closed, and ladies who had to come down to the coast are still forbidden to return by the authorities. On the other hand, where our friends were enabled to remain on the spot, they have already been reinstated in their houses, and the work is again proceeding, quietly and with caution. We have said that the riots have hindered the outward progress of the work, but it is through much tribulation that the kingdom of God must come, and doubtless

these testings develop and strengthen the native Church as as nothing else could, and in many cases they help the people to understand the missionary's motives, and to see the reality of his faith in God. Such results as these, although not so apparent, will in the end be found to far outweigh the seeming hindrances.

The unsettled feeling caused by the riots in the West had not passed away when the news came of the terrible massacre at Ku-ch'eng, near Foo-chow, in which the Rev. Robert Stewart, his wife and children, and their fellow-workers, lost their lives. So great a loss of life was quite unprecedented in the history of Protestant missions in China, and when full information came to hand, it was seen that the attack upon the missionaries was the result of a deliberately planned effort to expel foreigners from the district, and, in so doing, to bring trouble upon the central Government in Peking. This terrible blow has called forth a widespread expression of sympathy with the friends of the murdered missionaries, and also with the two missionary societies in connection with which they labored. We unite with many others in praising God for the abundant grace granted to the friends of those who were thus suddenly called away, and we see many tokens that God is graciously using this terrible event to call forth His people into a fuller appreciation of how worthy He is to receive all that they have to offer, and that lives laid down for the furtherance of the Gospel are never spent in vain.

It was thought that with the riots in Si-ch'uen, and the massacre at Ku-ch'eng, matters in China had surely reached their worst; but news from the far north-west travels slowly, and recently we have learned that early in the year a Mohammedan rebellion had commenced in the province of Kan-suh, which has since then developed into a very large movement. Several walled cities have been besieged, and the provincial capital has fallen, while in the country districts many villages have been burned, large numbers of men have been killed, and even helpless women and defenceless children have been murdered in cold blood; others have fled, often terribly wounded, into the cities. The loving attention that some of the missionaries have been enabled to show for Jesus' sake to these wounded fugitives is likely to open many hearts to receive the Gospel, and so out of the deepest darkness the Lord causes light to arise.

It may seem as though we had already described a picture full of dark shadows, but we have yet another deep trial to tell of in this year's history of our own Mission. Our death rate had been singularly low up to the beginning of September, but during that month one beloved brother was called away, having succumbed to typhoid fever; and early in October three missionaries, one little babe, and two Chinese Christians and three school girls were carried off by cholera in one station. This blow came at a time of fierce persecution, when the Christians in that district seemed more than usually to require the help and counsel of those on whose Christian sympathy they had learned to rely. Around Bing-yae large numbers had had their houses pulled down, all their property destroyed, and apparently their lives were only saved by fleeing from their persecutors.

While clouds have thus hung heavily over much of the work during the past year, there have also been many sunbeams breaking through to remind us that our way is not hidden from the Lord, and that our judgment has not passed over from our God.—*China's Millions.*